wreck the World Trade Organization Ministerial meeting in Seattle;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government, so far, or proposed to be taken to put the economy of the country on the rails if such countries do not participate in the process of development and to keep pace with the world economy?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The principal reason for the breakdown of negotiations at the Seattle Ministerial conference of WTO was due to a wide differences on major issues between member countries. The threat perception from globalization of trade was mainly the perception of anti WTO groups of Non Government Organizations (NGOs), who also had delayed the inaugural session of the Third Ministerial Conference of WTO at Seattle on 30th November, 1999.

(c) On the one hand, Indian Government is autonomously continuing with its economic reforms, including reforms in trade policy. On the other hand, in the WTO, India and the developing countries are vigorously articulating that the WTO, to progress with its work, should not have non-trade issues in its agenda and must take on board the concerns of developing countries with regard to implementation of existing WTO agreements. It has also been conveyed that the mandated negotiations and mandated reviews must also proceed as scheduled in the WTO agreements.

Export of Onion

1089. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Karnataka has requested Government to permit it to export certain varieties of onion through the State owned corporations/federations in order to mitigate the problems faced by the farmers on account of the glut in the market; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the views of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Requests have been received from time to time from the Government of Karnataka for permission to export Bangalore Rose as also other varieties of

onion through state owned agencies. Government has designated the Karnataka State Agricultural Produce Processing and Export Corporation Ltd. (KAPPEC), Bangalore as well as the Karnataka State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd. (KSCMF), Bangalore as the canalising agencies for export of onion and has been allocating specific quotas to them for export of onion. For the period 9.2.2000 till 31.3.2000, KAPPEC and KSCMF each have been allowed to export 2500 MTs of all varieties of onions either directly or through registered exporters.

Competitiveness of Developing Countries

1090. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) while addressing the partnership summit organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry, he called for resisting any attempts by the World Trade Organization to kill the competitiveness of the developing countries by interfering in non-trade activities, asking the WTO to confine itself to trade issues only; and

(b) if so, what precise concerns of the developing countries were voiced by him?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) While addressing the Partnership Summit-2000 organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on January 10, 2000, it was urged that WTO should be given a much narrower, trade-oriented remit. It was emphasised that WTO should be confined to trade issues only as many of the non-trade related issues, like core labour standards were sought to be introduced into the WTO's agenda by the developed countries only as protectionist devices, with a view to curb the comparative advantage of the developing countries. It was also impressed that non-trade issues can be properly addressed by the appropriate international institutions, like International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the case of labour standards, as they are more competent and better equipped to handle these issues than WTO.

(b) It has been emphasised at various fora that WTO should first redress the concerns on "Implementation Issues" as have been raised by India along with other developing countries in the preparatory process to the Third WTO Ministerial Conference. These "Implementation Issues" relate to: